

DECEMBER 19, 1946

# Illinois U Library Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

BROADCAST BY STATIONS OF THE AMERICAN BROADCASTING CO.



## Is World Disarmament Possible Now?

*Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.*

### *Speakers*

NORMAN THOMAS

WILLIAM J. DONOVAN

### *Interrogators*

MILLARD LAMPELL

REAGAN (TEX) McCRARY

(See page 15)

### **COMING**

—December 26, 1946—

Would You Rather Live in a Small Town  
or a Big City?

—January 2, 1946—

Would You Like To Turn the Clock Back?

Published by THE TOWN HALL, Inc., New York 18, N.Y.

## ★ ★ ★ C O N T E N T S ★ ★ ★

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### THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 19:

#### "Is World Disarmament Possible Now?"

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### THE BROADCAST OF DECEMBER 26:

#### "Would You Rather Live in a Small Town or a Big City?"

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### THE BROADCAST OF JANUARY 2:

#### "Would You Like To Turn the Clock Back?"

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The Broadcast of December 19 originated in Town Hall in New York City, from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., E.S.T., over the American Broadcasting Company Network.

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Town Meeting is published by The Town Hall, Inc., Town Meeting Publication Office: 400 S. Front St., Columbus 15, Ohio. Send Subscriptions and single copy orders to Town Hall, 123 West 43rd St., New York 18, N.Y. Subscription price, \$4.50 a year, 10c a copy. Entered as second-class matter, May 9, 1942, at the Post Office at Columbus, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



DECEMBER 19, 1946

VOLUME 12, No. 34

## Is World Disarmament Possible Now?

### Announcer:

From Town Hall in New York City, the home of America's Town Meeting, welcome to the 453rd session of America's most popular radio forum. What do you think about tonight's question—"Is World Disarmament Possible Now?"

It is your tax money and your security that are at stake. So listen while our moderator, the president of Town Hall, New York, tells you about tonight's discussion—Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. Just a word about last week's program before we get on with tonight's question. You wrote so many helpful and thoughtful letters that I want to express my appreciation and that of the American Broadcasting Company for your prompt response to our request that you tell us what you thought about

last week's subject. Well, you didn't pull your punches and that's what we like most of all.

We are grateful, too, for your letters of appreciation, and I want to assure you that every one of your letters is carefully read by one or more members of our staff. Your comments on last week's program will be read by all four speakers just as rapidly as we can reproduce them and get them to them.

Now, tonight we are talking about spending ten billion dollars a year of your tax money. We are talking about a possible reduction of this staggering sum to six billion dollars a year. And what would this mean to our national security in this Year II of the Atomic Age?

The United Nations General Assembly has passed a resolution favoring a general reduction of armaments. But it remains to be seen just what the individual nations, particularly the Big Three,

will be willing to do; and of greatest urgency—what will they do about the control of atomic weapons?

Until Mr. Gromyko speaks on Friday, that's tomorrow morning, the shadow of the veto hangs over the American plan for rigid control and immediate punishment for any nation using atomic power or manufacturing weapons.

Hailing from the South, as I do, I remember some "unreconstructed" Rebels — not Senator Claghorn who used to tell me that we could have licked them Yankees with cornstalks, but the rascals wouldn't fight that way.

Of course, weapons are important, but of greatest importance are the minds of the men who control and use them. Men gave up their six-shooters only when they became convinced that the sheriff, operating under law, could take care of their individual security better than they could. And the sheriff could not allow three rival "big shots" to retain their arms—all had to be equal under the law.

Well, Mr. Thomas and General Donovan, do you think that we will be able to get the individual nations, all of them, to put their six-shooters on the table and turn the law enforcement over to the sheriff?

Is world disarmament possible now?

Or must nations continue to rely on our atomic six-shooters?

We will hear first from a man who's been on this firing line many times before, Socialist Party leader, chairman of the Post-war World Council, Trustee of Town Hall and author of a forthcoming book called *An Appeal to the Nation*, Mr. Norman Thomas. Mr. Thomas. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Thomas:**

Is world disarmament possible now? Yes. Or peace is impossible and we must resign ourselves, within another generation, to war fought with atomic weapons, poisons and bacteria, to the destruction of civilization, and perhaps of mankind.

Neither the United Nations nor any better international organization will be more enduring or more successful in preventing war than the League of Nations, if its constituent members arm against one another. Certainly they are not arming against Mars or the Moon.

Expressions of devotion to peace will not be worth the paper they are written on if all nations are preoccupied with hate, fear, and the enormously costly preparations for war which, at once, express and nurture these devastating emotions.

Disarmament is as much a minimum price for peace between nations as it is the price of peace between wards in our cities,

counties in our states, or states in our Nation.

By disarmament, I mean more than the reduction of arms. I rejoice that the Assembly of the United Nations has suddenly given us new hope by expression of desire to abolish instrumentalities of mass destruction and to encourage the establishment of machinery for international supervision of arms production.

But it is completely preposterous to believe that there will be effective renunciation of atomic bombs if the nations keep, even on a reduced scale, mass armies and great navies. There can be no renunciation of poisons, bacteria, and atomic weapons without the renunciation of war.

If the Soviet Union, for instance, should keep peacetime military conscription, if Britain should keep her flar-flung military and naval bases, it is a moral certainty that the United States will not abandon all inquiry into or development of modern scientific methods of war.

There is logic in disarmament. It passes the wit of man to find any logical ratio of reduction of arms. If, for instance, General Donovan, all we get is a fooling around with reduction of arms, within five or at most ten years, secretly or openly, there will be competition among the Big Three to rearm Germany and Japan.

What, then, do we mean when we say disarmament? Five things:

1. The establishment of an international atomic development authority and the other provisions of the Baruch Plan for turning atomic energy only into uses of peace. That plan does honor to the intelligence of the American will to peace.

2. The universal abolition of peacetime military training. You cannot train all or most of the finest young men for war and get peace.

3. The demilitarization of military and naval bases and the narrow waterways which are the channels of world commerce. Necessary police power must be in the hands of an international body. There is no other reasonable settlement of current issues of island bases and the control of the Dardanelles.

4. Armaments and armed forces, on land, sea, and in the air, must be reduced to a level necessary to preserve internal order, and deprived of the weapons of an aggressive war except insofar as the nations by agreement may authorize the establishment of a quota system for international policing.

5. Adequate instrumentalities, freed from the power of any one nation to veto effective action, must be set up to supervise disarmament and positively to guarantee security.

During an interim period the United Nations and its organs, with some changes in its Constitution by amendment or supplementary provision, may meet these requirements.

We shall not get and keep this type of disarmament, except as with it may go the orderly liquidation of all forms of imperialism—colonial or soviet; British, Russian, or American. Disarmament is ethically and logically inconsistent with imperialism and forces necessary to police great empires will be capable of aggression.

The plan I am proposing will not forever guarantee peace. Abiding peace will not be assured until men have gone much further than this to remove the economic and political causes of war and to establish what cannot successfully be established today—a federal world government, fit to be called a federation of cooperative commonwealths.

But, disarmament will solve, out of hand, many of the fears, suspicions, and disputes which now threaten our peace. It will relieve the tension on others. Above all, disarmament will create the atmosphere in which a hungry world, freed of a crushing burden, may grapple with the problem of harnessing for life, not death, those technological resources which might mean abundance for all.

Of course, disarmament will be difficult. There is no easy price

for bringing the great boon of peace to the world, in which science has unleashed for destruction the power that held the atom and the universe together. But without disarmament nothing else that we have tried, not total victory, not the United Nations, not any conceivable form of world government now possible, will save us.

Let no human being who loves his children and has faith for living say that this disarmament, so necessary for life itself, will be rejected by the people or even the government of any nation—not at any rate until we have tried, as no nation yet has tried, to arouse the people to the price of peace, which they cannot afford not to pay.

We are not proposing any universal, inescapable government except so much as may be necessary to carry out disarmament. We are not asking men to forget conflicts of interest and ideologies, but to carry them on without resort to instrumentalities which can mean only universal death.

Until recently there was logic in the fear that the Soviet dictatorship might say "no" despite the fact that disarmament would be so obviously to the advantage of its people, but the Russian acceptance of the principle of supervision gives ground for hope.

The Russian rulers are no pacifists, but they are realists who know the cost of arms and total

war. They could not, if they would, keep from their own people, much less the colored races of the world, the news that America, at the height of her power, had advanced a plan for disarmament so fair, so inclusive in its benefits as we have proposed.

Men who were stunned by war and the atomic bomb need to be aroused by one clear trumpet call to the fact that they need not in desperate poverty prepare the means of their own destruction.

I covet for my country leadership in proposing universal disarmament as an immediate objective to the Security Council and to the nations. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. Thomas. Now we're going to hear from a new Town Hall trustee, and we're giving him quite an initiation here tonight. Major General William J. Donovan, prominent New York attorney, known affectionately during World War I as "Wild Bill" and in the latest war, Director of the Office of Strategic Services—the famous OSS—General Donovan. (*Applause.*)

#### **General Donovan:**

The one thing upon which I am in complete agreement with Mr. Thomas is this: That world peace should be promoted by every effective means. But the real question is, under what conditions will disarmament promote world peace?

To Mr. Thomas, the answer seems a simple one. He says that world disarmament is possible now or else peace is impossible. From that statement, we can gather that Mr. Thomas believes that armaments are a primary cause of war and that once we effect disarmament we will have peace.

To my mind, the causes of war lie much deeper than armaments. I do not say that armaments may not influence war, its causes or its effects, but I suggest that history and common sense indicate that disarmament may invite war.

I do say that the basic causes of war are conflicting political, racial, and economic interests, personal ambitions, loves and hatreds, and the simple belligerence of human beings. These are the conflicts that must be dealt with.

In fact, armaments are very often the symptoms of these underlying causes. The point I make is not that the system suggested by Mr. Thomas would be ineffective if established and carried out in the good faith and spiritual disarmament of other nations, but rather, it is my view, that you cannot have a world organization to deal with the basic causes of war until it has first been demonstrated by experience in practical, international cooperation that the common action of all is more effective in resolving national conflicts than any action taken by a nation acting alone.

But we're not living in that kind of world today. There are problems that we must face and deal with now, without the aid of such an organization.

Even while we talk, in various parts of the world people are killing one another or planning to kill one another.

How can there be any guarantee that peace will be maintained so long as any nation has the right to decide questions of war and peace for itself?

A hundred years before World War II statesmen, pacifists, jurists, and international organizations failed in the effective reduction of armaments.

Why did they fail? Because no state really believed that it should disarm, since it lived in an atmosphere of mutual fear and antagonism. In the period between World War I and World War II, various proposals were made for immediate and complete general disarmament, but these also were rejected.

Some nations sought to avoid the conflict with Hitler by appeasement. Others, like our own, hoped to avoid war by weakening our armament position.

The coming of the atomic age may revolutionize our thinking. The scientists tell us that what has been discovered is not merely a new weapon but a new force. Fear of atomic consequences may com-

pel the nations to reconcile their conflicts.

New inventions annihilate space, increase the tempo of war, and by the power of mass destruction put each citizen in the front line of battle. In many respects, the civilian in modern war has a harder time than the soldier. We have swung full circle so that today women and children are as much the victims of war as they were when put to the sword in the days of Genghis Khan.

Until the time comes when all instruments of war illegally used will be abolished, the problem of atomic bomb control will remain foremost. If effective international control can be obtained over atomic energy, then that may serve as a guide to control over other mass destruction weapons.

But that time has not yet come. The implications of the plan for the control of atomic energy are even greater outside the field of atomic energy than within the field itself. Within the field, all one can expect is not the prevention of war but protection against a completely surprise attack.

Outside this field, it does offer the pattern of world control in cases limited in scope but sufficiently urgent to induce governments to make the necessary sacrifice of sovereignty to obtain security through joint action.

Having set the pattern in this particular instance, the chance to

use this control in the development of a system of practical co-operation is presented. It's for this reason that those listening in tonight are anxious to know what answer Mr. Gromyko will give to Mr. Baruch tomorrow. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, General Donovan. Now, we come to that part of the program where two special interrogators are supposed to find flaws in the arguments of Mr. Thomas and General Donovan. Tonight, we have two able veterans of World War II who are no strangers to this program—Millard Lampell and "Tex" McCrary. Mr. Lampell's been an extremely busy young man as an author ever since he got out of the service. He's written a movie, "The Long Way Home," and another movie, and has just completed a play.

But tonight, Mr. Lampell has his sights trained on General Donovan, and this is one place where rank doesn't count. A former sergeant can now exercise complete freedom of speech in questioning a Major General, who's also now a civilian, over coast-to-coast network. Step up, Millard. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Lampell:** You know, George, this is getting to be a habit. It seems like every time I appear on Town Hall, I'm up to my ears in brass. (*Laughter.*) First there was a colonel, then a

lieutenant colonel, and then the Assistant Secretary of War, and now a two-star general. Well, I spent three years saying nothing but "Yes, sir" and "No, sir," so I've got a lot to make up for. (*Laughter.*)

General, if you don't mind, instead of taking up my whole two minutes with giving a summary, I might start shooting a few questions at you.

First, however, I did want to say one thing. I'm kind of a maverick tonight, since I don't completely agree with Norman Thomas, either. I go a little further along one line. I blushed a little when he held up the United States as the champion of the colored race, as I think of my Mexican and Negro friends, and I wasn't quite sure whether he was speaking about us.

And then one other thing. About the Baruch Plan. The assumption, in all these speeches tonight, seems to be that it's the Baruch Plan or else. I think there's more chance for disarmament, even if there has to be discussions of the Baruch Plan. (*Applause.*)

As a matter of fact, I think that in tendering the Baruch Plan and implying that if the Russians don't take it, Congress won't pass any other agreement, we ourselves are using a kind of subtle hidden veto. I think there is a possibility for discussion on the Baruch Plan. (*Applause.*)

Now, General, a few questions. You kept speaking about history, about all the times we tried disarmament and it failed. And then you spoke about atomic energy and said that this was the beginning of a new era.

Now, don't you think that when a new, historic era of life or death for the human race begins, then it isn't enough just to follow history. Then we have the responsibility of making some history. (*Applause.*)

**General Donovan:** I agree with that completely, and I said it first. (*Applause and laughter.*) I said—oh, the sergeant and I get on. I was a sergeant myself once. (*Laughter.*) I know how he feels.

**Mr. Lampell:** I wish I could say the same about my being a general. (*Laughter.*)

**General Donovan:** No, you're lucky. You don't know how lucky you are. I do agree with you on that. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Lampell:** Well, now, there was an argument. Maybe I'm wrong about this. There seemed to be an argument against disarmament in that it wasn't the cause of war. Now, as a lawyer, it seems to me you would understand that although poverty and ignorance may develop criminals, this is no argument against having laws to prevent them from carrying guns. (*Applause.*)

**General Donovan:** No, that's a statement. I don't know that there is any question in it. I agree with

it. The only point is that if he refers to the guns, I'd go back to Mr. Denny. The trouble is we haven't yet got the sheriff, so we've got to hang on to the gun until we get the sheriff. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Lampell:** Well, now, let's get to another point since we seem to be in agreement all the way down the line. You said right now men are killing each other and this is very true. You said in some places—and I suppose you meant Spain—they are planning to kill each other. I think that is also true.

However, it seems to me that we learned from the last war that a small shot, a few deaths, a battle in some small, almost unknown country, can spread very quickly and usually has much deeper things behind it.

It seems to me that the very fact that men are killing each other now and the very fact that, if another war should start from these scattered shots, it would be an atomic war, is an argument for the need for disarmament now with almost no alternative open to us. (*Applause.*)

**General Donovan:** That's just a statement of fact. I don't know whether I can agree with that or not, because it implies too many things. It implies what kind of disarmament you are talking about. It implies what you are going to be armed with. I never found that in the case of a fellow who really

wanted to fight that if you took his gun away he didn't get a rock and to use it.

**Mr. Denny:** Yes, or a cornstalk.  
*(Laughter.)*

**General Donovan:** Yes, or a cornstalk.

**Mr. Lampell:** That exactly brings me to the point. The point, I think, that we are arguing now is that disarmament doesn't necessarily mean taking pocket knives away from all the human beings on the face of the earth, and that to deprive people of the large, major, huge weapons of destruction which it is possible to control and to inspect, is to cut down their potential for killing each other and for spreading a world war.

I say this in leading up to another question. You said quite clearly at the end of your speech—I know I got this one right—that if we—

**General Donovan:** You're not sure about the other ones? *(Laughter.)*

**Mr. Lampell:** —if we get atomic agreement, that will form a pattern for disarmament agreement.

**General Donovan:** No, you're wrong again. *(Laughter.)* I said that it would form a pattern which could be used in problems of sufficient urgency that nations concerned would be willing to sacrifice their sovereignty.

I'm talking about the fact that one of our great difficulties in get-

ting disarmament or anything else is the sovereignty of these nations. How can that sovereignty be surrendered?

**Mr. Denny:** All right, thank you, General. Now it's time to get Mr. Thomas up here on the spot, but we're next going to introduce to you our second interrogator.

Here is a man, Mr. Thomas, who every morning with his lovely wife, Jinx Falkenburg, questions all kinds of celebrities on the radio. His war record entitles him to a little participation on this discussion as he was a lieutenant colonel and photographic officer in the Eighth Air Force. Tex McCrary, will you step up? *(Applause.)*

**Mr. McCrary:** Well, George, thank you very much for not introducing me as Tex Falkenburg. *(Laughter.)* I wouldn't have really minded it. Mr. Thomas, I have listened with intense interest to your earnest and sincere arguments for disarmament now. I'm especially interested in and a little familiar with your arguments because I was one of the thousands of young men back in the 1930's who believed so passionately that the first step toward world peace was for America to take the lead in disarmament.

That was back in the days when the kids in England were taking the Oxford Oath not to fight for King or country no matter what

happened. We all believed so blindly in your eloquent crusade for disarmament.

Mr. Thomas, do you remember some of the things you said as late as 1938? Remember, by 1938, Hitler had profited from the failure of the first war's allies to slap Mussolini down. Hitler read the signs correctly and so he sat unchallenged across the face of middle Europe by 1938. He had gone back into the Rhineland.

At that time, in 1938, you still had things like this to say. You were opposing even Roosevelt's belated naval rearmament plan. In 1938, Mr. Thomas, you said, "Swollen armaments are practically and psychologically a temptation to war, not a guarantee of peace. They must be opposed."

In 1938, you still preached that we should disarm in order to set an example to a naughty world.

In 1938, you charged that any alliance between America and Britain would represent a threat of naval war against Japan and hence, that we would outweigh the Japs 16 to 5 and we would threaten the peace in the Pacific.

Mr. Thomas, you gave my generation a bum steer because you taught us to lay our pistols down before there was a tough cop on the beat and an honest judge on the bench.

You helped pull our teeth before the world was ready to turn vegetarian. Your speeches then were

so very much like your speech tonight. I spent the afternoon reading your speeches of then and I've spent tonight listening to your speech tonight.

But this time, Mr. Thomas, instead of being the first nation to disarm and the last nation to re-arm because we are the one nation in the world today that wants nothing from anybody else, I believe this time we should stay strong and help an infant United Nations enforce the will for peace in the world until *after* there is a world law and world police to enforce world law. (*Applause.*)

Now, one specific question, Mr. Thomas. You rejoice, as all of us do, in the signs that the Russians are a little nearer a surrender of some of the sovereignty that must be scrapped, all of it, before world peace can be enforced. But, Mr. Thomas, do you honestly believe that Russia would have been so conciliatory if, a year ago, we had broadcast to the world the secrets of the atomic bomb and then had scrapped the stock pile of bombs we had on hand?

In other words, has American atomic armament been a temptation to war or a persuader in behalf of the path to peace? (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Thomas:** I think the sergeant is fighting some straw men, or at least some men that are kind of dead. Sometime I'd like to

argue what I said before the war as a whole, and I'd like to say I am mighty sorry the world didn't listen.

But tonight, I'm only going to say this—I am not proposing for one instant unilateral disarmament. I am not suggesting disarmament even by example.

I am saying that unless we all disarm, the sheriff can't even get started. And I am saying that part of the program of disarmament is enough international government or control through a world court and the operation of an atomic development authority and the Security Council, with some amendments, to keep close inspection and to set up a security system. Seven minutes is a short time to develop that, but that's what I'm arguing for.

I may be as mistaken as Mr. Roosevelt, we will assume, was in his Chautauqua speech in 1936, at that date and still be right now, and that's what we ought to be arguing.

Moreover, the question about the atomic bomb is not so much: Is it to the advantage of the United States that it has it or not, at least to the Russians? The question is: Does the world dare to go on indulging the luxury of war when war can be so completely destructive to all of us? Isn't it now necessary, above all things, to find another way?

Now I'm at a little bit of a disadvantage tonight because I apparently have to debate three people. On the subject of the Baruch Plan may I say this, that at no time have I said—and I don't think Mr. Baruch has, in all fairness—that it must be taken completely unchanged.

But I say that the plan won't work without acceptance of a kind of supervision not subject to veto. That I am insisting on. And I don't believe that the failure tomorrow will necessarily—if there is a failure—damn all negotiations, but that I'm insisting on.

Mr. Lampell, so far am I from extolling American virtues to colored people, that I said that if we in our power should say we are asking all of you to disarm with renunciation of imperialism, then we might assert a new confidence among colored people. I hope you'll agree that that's a good idea, Mr. Lampell, since you're supposed to be on my side. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Lampell, you'd better come up here and make yourself clear with Mr. Thomas.

**Mr. Lampell:** Well, it depends on how you define interrogator. I am an independent citizen tonight. (*Laughter.*) I'm glad you feel that way about the colored races, but I think it's a little beside the issue tonight. About the Baruch Plan, one of the things I had specifically in mind was

the fact—and I admit I am as disturbed as Mr. Gromyko on this point—that the Baruch Plan makes no mention of what is to be done with our stock pile of atomic bombs.

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Thomas says it does. Will you step up, Mr. Thomas.

**Mr. Thomas:** The whole plan is based on turning everything over, when the proper international authority is established, to the direction of the authority. I think it's a pity that Americans have to misrepresent their chief virtue, because this plan is the chief virtue we've shown. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. McCrary, have you any other question? If not, we'll get questions from the audience.

**Mr. McCrary:** Just one question. It isn't really a question only to Mr. Thomas, it's a question to me and everybody else. You know, the problem of disarmament is defining what is a weapon.

You remember that General Patton said that the two and a half ton truck beat the Germans in the West and the Russians said the same thing about the East. That is a great problem. What is disarmament? What is a weapon?

I'd like to get, if Mr. Thomas doesn't mind, his definition of how far he would extend disarmament. Does he mean stopping research and rocket-propelled missiles? Does he recommend stopping re-

search in supersonic-speed airplanes—things that have no visible commercial use? Where does disarmament really begin?

**Mr. Denny:** Well, we're just beginning to get our minds around this. Mr. Thomas?

**Mr. Thomas:** That's a type of argumentation that is plausible, has some merit, but is extraordinarily dangerous. In our present world, it is perfectly true that you cannot possibly live under modern civilization and not make use of natural powers which can easily be turned to war and make that war far more dangerous than wars with rocks.

By the way, General Donovan, I know plenty of people who disarm, don't fight with rocks, and I may say that the similarity of nations to men is not so good because you can't get nations to fight unless they are trained to and propagandized to for a long time.

But let me go back to armament. Let's get rid of atom bombs on the Baruch Plan with supervision and the direction to peace. Let's ban, of course, poisons and bacteria. You can't do it perfectly, I'll admit.

There are certain types of weapons that are clearly aggressive; they are not needed. You reduce forces to the level necessary to internal order. There'll be disputes about it, but it'll be a mighty big reduction over what we've got now.

You set scientists and the mind of the people, by your action, to using their scientific discoveries for life, not death, and you will not get perfect safety—I never said you would. But you would reduce the risk.

You'd take off the back of starving men the burden of fear and hate which make them support a 30 billion dollar armament program in the world now. In that

new atmosphere, you'd get a chance to make that rapid progress toward those other settlements that are impossible.

If you want me to say, gentlemen, that there is no absolute safety for us, consider that I've said it now. It is a relative thing and I am saying that there is no relative safety in the kind of competition in the most deadly means of destruction, in the competition

## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**NORMAN THOMAS** — Best known of American Socialists, Norman Thomas was the candidate of his party for President in 1928, 1932, 1936, 1940, and 1944. Born in Ohio, he received an A.B. degree at Princeton and a B.D. at Union Theological Seminary. Following his ordination as a Presbyterian minister in 1911, he served in several New York City churches until 1931, when he dedicated the ministry.

In 1918, Mr. Thomas founded the *World Tomorrow* which he edited for three years. His success with this publication led him in 1921 to become editor for one year of *The Nation*.

Mr. Thomas is chairman of the executive committee of the Post-War World Council. He is the author of many magazine articles and numerous books. Among his books are *The Conscientious Objector in America*, later reprinted under the title, *Is Conscience a Crime?*; *America's Way Out—A Program for Democracy*; *As I See It* (with Paul Blanchard); *War—No Profit, No Glory, No Need; Socialism on the Defensive* and *We Have a Future*.

**WILLIAM JOSEPH DONOVAN** — An attorney and former director of the Office of Strategic Services, Mr. Donovan has the ranking of Major General in the United States Army. With an A.B. and an LL.B. from Columbia University, Major Donovan began the practice of law in 1907 in Buffalo. In 1922 he was Republican candidate for lieutenant governor of New York State.

Major Donovan has been U.S. district attorney for the Western District of N.Y., assistant attorney general of the United States, and assistant to the Attorney General. He has served on many commis-

sions and committees related to both state and federal government. He has also served as a legal counselor for many groups.

During World War I, he achieved fame as major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel with the 165th Infantry (the old 69th N.Y.). For his war services he received numerous medals and awards. During World War II, Major Donovan was an unofficial observer for the Secretary of the Navy in Great Britain and Southeastern Europe. He was appointed coordinator of information in 1941, and director of Strategic Services in June, 1942.

**JOHN REAGAN (TEX) McCRARY** — Mr. McCrary is a radio commentator and a former executive editor of the *American Mercury*. A lieutenant-colonel, he served in the Mediterranean area and was public Relations Officer for the 8th Army Air Force.

Mr. McCrary started his newspaper career as a copy boy on the *New York World Telegram*. He later became chief editorial writer for the *New York Daily Mirror*.

**MILLARD LAMPELL** — A former sergeant in the Army Air Forces, Millard Lampell is author of *The Long Way Home*. This book is on rehabilitation of veterans. He has also written many radio programs on this subject. Mr. Lampell did the ballad and narration for the current motion picture "A Walk in the Sun." His latest job with the Army was in army hospitals where he gathered material for his broadcasts and for his official recordings on orientation. Mr. Lampell lives in New York City.

of training men for war which is now going on.

I am saying that reduction on the old pattern won't do the job. We've got to try something new, something with dramatic appeal that goes somewhere near the roots of the matter and for that I'm arguing. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Now, gentlemen, you've set the stage for an excellent question period, so while we get ready for that let's pause briefly for station identification.

**Announcer:** You are listening to America's Town Meeting of the Air from Town Hall, New York. How would you like to have a

complete copy of tonight's discussion together with questions and answers in a small pocket-size, neatly printed pamphlet? For your convenience, Town Hall publishes the Town Meeting Bulletin containing the complete transcription of tonight's discussion which you may receive by sending your request, together with ten cents, to Town Hall, New York 18, New York.

If you would like to have these Town Meeting Bulletins come to you regularly each week, enclose \$1 for 11 weeks or \$2.35 for six months. Please print your name and address clearly and allow two weeks for delivery.

# QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

*Mr. Denny:* Not only to encourage good questions, but to remind you that United States Savings Bonds are good investments, Town Hall is offering an \$18.75 United States Savings Bond which will be worth \$25 in ten years for the question which, in the opinion of our committee of judges, does the most to bring out facts or widen the scope of this discussion—it's almost wide enough—provided the question is limited to 25 words. Now we start with the question for the gentleman here. Yes?

*Man:* Mr. Thomas. Can the world be safe in believing in Russian disarmament with no equivalents of the *Daily Worker* existing to expose Russian violations above the scrutiny of inspections?

*Mr. Thomas:* I don't suppose it can be perfectly safe under any circumstances. I regret as much as you possibly can the absence of an equivalent on the other side to, let us say, the *Daily Worker*. But I happen to believe that there is a self-interest in life even in Russia. I happen to believe that no dictatorship is so omnipotent that you can't crush through somehow to the minds of people whose very lives are at stake.

I also happen to believe that it is reasonably possible under the Baruch Plan and similar plans to find out whether or not nations

are making big arms. I think that even without the equivalent of a *Daily Worker* on another side in Russia, it is possible to be pretty well assured by reasonable intelligence if Russia is departing from what would then be her pledged word.

Incidentally, I'm a little suspicious of other governments, including our own. The temptations of power are not exclusively confined to Russia. I wish Americans would sometimes remember that, too. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Thomas. The gentleman with glasses.

*Man:* General Donovan. Do you think it will be easier to acquire the super-sheriff you talk about once Russia develops her own atomic bomb?

*General Donovan:* I would think not. The trading would then be over.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, General. The lady over there.

*Lady:* Mr. Thomas. How can you have disarmament now when the peace to a war ended nearly two years ago has not yet been written?

*Mr. Thomas:* One of the reasons I want a proposal actively entered on for disarmament now is because I doubt if we'll get peace or any decent peace until there is some dramatic and unifying appeal.

We're not going to get peace on this piecemeal settlement of things on which there are so many differences. But suppose somebody said, "Now, just a minute. People of the world, listen. You've got differences. Some of them are justified and some aren't. But you don't have to kill each other among nations any more than differences make you kill each other in your block."

Let us, therefore, take time out to start now universal disarmament. Well, what would happen? The discussion of the Dardanelles, the discussion of island bases would just fade away on my plan. Strategic boundaries would become of far less importance.

You'd make an enormous progress to settling those questions, and you'd have a different atmosphere. You'd do what is the price of life—namely, lay down the basis for men to quarrel, if they must, but not with atomic bombs and bacteria in their hands. We've done something at it in private life. We can do it in civil life; we can do it in the life of nations. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The gentlemen over there.

*Man:* Mr. McCrary, why do you infer that world disarmament would mean that America disarms first and rearms last?

*Mr. McCrary:* I'm inferring that only because the people who are talking loudest about disarmament

seem to be Americans like Mr. Thomas, and because of the fact that it worked once before, and secondly, because of the fact that in America the people have the greatest freedom to express themselves.

We're coming into a time now when we are going to be faced next year with a ten billion dollar bill for armament—current armament—and a ten billion dollar additional bill for veteran costs of the war that is just finished and previous wars—twenty billion dollars the cost of war.

People are going to begin to say, "I can't pay any more taxes. We've got to have economy. We've got to cut down." People in America have the freedom to say that, and they *will* say it and they *will* cut down so the chances are that if people like Mr. Thomas talk as they talked before the last war—before the war just finished—we are going to be the ones to disarm first and the last to rearm. That's the way we work. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Mr. Thomas wants to comment on that.

*Mr. Thomas:* Just as a matter of historic fact, we did not disarm. We neither armed efficiently nor disarmed. That so-called Washington Disarmament Conference was a conference on the limitations of arms and helps show how futile that is, which dissolved the Anglo-Japanese alliance to our

advantage and gave us a 5-5-3 ratio with Japan on the little end.

We passed bigger naval bills in money than any power at the time. Maybe we were stupid the way we armed, but we didn't disarm. Let's face facts.

Mr. McCrary surely knows that if all he's talking about is speech about disarmament, the Russians are ahead of us, because Stalin, himself, on two occasions, through Litvinoff, proposed complete disarmament and, unfortunately, owing I think to the President's overlooking a bet, it was Molotov that raised the question, not as I wanted it raised, perhaps not if you like, as sincerely as I could wish, but he raised the question in the United Nations.

My hope in Russia is common interest, and I am proposing supervision and I don't think you'd get very far by this extreme self-righteousness. (*Applause.*)

Mr. McCrary: Mr. Thomas, the most eloquent plea for disarmament that I know of in history was made by a very able gentleman named Mr. Litvinoff when he said, some time between the last two wars, that we must disarm down to the last button on the last vest of the last drummer boy in the last army in the last nation in the world. What I want to know now is what's happened to Mr. Litvinoff?

Mr. Thomas: Well, what happened is that not a single nation

in the world listened to him. There was not one action by the League of Nations or the constituent nations to follow up. If it was a bluff, no one called it.

If you want me to criticize totalitarianism, I'll do it. But, I don't do it along those lines, which are a twisting of history. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: All right. The gentleman there, please.

Man: I want to ask Mr. Lampell a question. How can you say to General Donovan that we ought to disarm when you know that the Army, the Navy, the Marines, the Wacs, the Waves, and the Spars all get more money than we who volunteered in World War I did, and you can't fill the ranks now? (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Lampell: I don't get it. (*Laughter and applause.*)

Man: I'll restate it very briefly. If we can't get enough volunteers to fight at the high rate that we pay today, why should we disarm? (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Lampell: I think the question of volunteers is a little beside the issue. A small explosion went off in the State of New Mexico and all of a sudden war became no longer a question of the amount of men, but the amount of atomic bombs. (*Applause.*)

Man: My question is to General Donovan. If complete disarmament is not possible now, then what world conditions must

obtain within the next thousand years before a beginning of armament reduction is possible?

*General Donovan:* I've already replied to that, that the pilot effort in order to establish world disarmament through an organization that will make it feasible and not to have these phony disarmaments that have been going on. I myself am a very practical guy and I look forward rather than back. I try to figure out a method that will deal with the reality of things. The first thing to do is to see if you can make your machine work, if you can get the techniques to have your sovereign nations come in and say, "We will surrender this, our sovereignty, because in our selfish interests it's the only thing to do," so I would begin tomorrow, if Mr. Gromyko gives us the chance. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Mr. Lampell?

*Mr. Lampell:* Well, I can't exactly get hold of the General tonight. I want to get clear now, exactly what's being said here. You are saying General, that there is within the United Nations the chance for a beginning of a process which may possibly eventually lead to disarmament. Is that so?

*General Donovan:* Yes. It would lead to disarmament first. It would lead to the elimination of the atomic bomb. It would lead to the possibility of abolishing war through bacteriological means. It

would abolish also the abuse of sovereign power by nations because they would submit to an international authority. That's what I'm looking for, but I want to deal with the facts.

*Mr. Lampell:* Fine. Now, that leads the question on to whether it's possible now. Is that so? And you believe that it is possible? The question is whether it is possible now.

*General Donovan:* I didn't say I believed it was possible. I said I wanted to try and the only way to try is to make use of the effort that is before the Security Council now in relation to the dealing with atomic energy and its control.

*Mr. Lampell:* General, I still feel there are two things that don't fit here.

*General Donovan:* Is it the shirt or coat? (*Laughter.*)

*Mr. Lampell:* You look pretty, only about—

*General Donovan:* You're the first one that ever said that. Especially a sergeant. (*Laughter.*)

*Mr. Lampell:* Any general that has enough sense to turn civilian deserves a compliment. (*Laughter and applause.*)

*General Donovan:* Some of us had to start that way.

*Mr. Lampell:* Now the point about disarmament is this: In your answer to this gentleman, and I believe in your speech—I'm sure in your speech—you did say that in order to have disarmament, it

was necessary, first, to have some kind of world organization. I would like to ask you whether you think the United Nations has the potential for being that sort of an organization?

*General Donovan:* No, but I think that through the United Nations we may be able to set up a world organization.

*Mr. Lampell:* Well, that's potential.

*General Donovan:* No, I didn't say *in* the United Nations, but *through* it we may be able to set one up, such as its Atomic Energy Authority.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. I think we have that point clear now. The young man right here has a question for Mr. Lampell.

*Man:* If all the nations in the U.N. disarm, in your opinion would it insure peace?

*Mr. Lampell:* We have agreed tonight that disarmament is not the complete answer to peace, but it is a first and necessary step, on the road that may eventually lead to peace and to the elimination of poverty, ignorance, prejudice, and superstition, and the rest of the seeds of war.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, the gentleman in the balcony.

*Man:* My question is for Mr. Thomas. I'd like to know what can be done on world disarmament if one nation refuses to abide by disarmament inspection and police procedure?

*Mr. Thomas:* If one nation refuses to abide, suppose you have another Town Meeting and I'll discuss it. The important thing is to try hard, to try in earnest. I don't think that this war was won by General Donovan, Sergeant Lampell, and Lieutenant Colonel McCrary, and others by saying "What will happen if one nation collapses?" They said, "We're not going to collapse; we'll keep going."

Now, I will tell you frankly that it will be a big set-back if one important nation refuses. But I think that those who agree can then make terms on which to organize their common defense, intellectual and moral, as well as physical, which will help the situation. If they will propagandize by deed and word, that there is a room inside for all nations, I think public opinion will compel them to come in.

Do you know that most historians believe that the First World War could have been avoided if it had not been for the rapidity with which on the continent men were mobilized. Let that be stopped, and you won't find men flocking to war. Incidentally, on the record of history, Stalin and his associates don't start hopeless wars.

*Mr. Denny:* Gentleman, on the right there.

*Man:* You've stated that the United States is the only nation in

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the world that doesn't want anything from anybody and I quite agree. But how is the world going to know that if we continue building up our atomic stockpile, and building super-duper bombers, and flying them all over the world and flaunting them in the face of our neighbors? (*Applause.*)

*Mr. McCrary:* In all these discussions, I think it is unnecessary to talk about other nations when we're talking about world peace. We might as well be realistic. There's only one nation that we could threaten or that could threaten us in the next 25 years, and that's Russia.

Now, going on from that point you say how can we make Russia believe that we are interested in world peace when we build up atomic power. I want to go back to something that Mr. Thomas has been building up as the way to get peace which is the Baruch Plan. I'd like to point out that Mr. Baruch said the way to go is to learn to say "A" first, and then the rest of the alphabet.

The one thing that Mr. Baruch has insisted upon above all else is that we keep the atomic bomb—in other words, we don't disarm—until we know that there is a cop on the beat, and a judge on the bench—a law and a cop to enforce it. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. McCrary. General Donovan and Mr. Norman Thomas are going to

prepare their summaries of tonight's discussion. In the meantime, let's hear the announcer who has news about our next three programs.

*Announcer:* Would you rather live in a small town or a big city? Next week when your Town Meeting will be televised from Schenectady, New York—of course, it will also be carried over the entire N.B.C. network as well—Charles Jackson, author of the *Lost Weekend* and the current bestseller, *The Fall of Valor*; and Granville Hicks, author of the new book, *Small Town*, will lock horns on a question which is of great concern to every American family—"Would You Rather Live in a Small Town or a Big City?"

Our interrogators for this occasion will be the famous radio couple, Tex McCrary and Jinx Falkenburg. Television listeners, please note!

The following week to start the New Year, America's Town Meeting will do its first origination in the moderator's hometown, Asheville, North Carolina. Our subject, most appropriate to these swift moving days, will be "Would You Like To Turn the Clock Back?"

The speakers will be Dr. George Lawton, author of *Aging Successfully* and an article in the December, 1946, *American Magazine* called, "How to Stay Young"; Margaret Bourke-White, celebrated

*Life* photographer and author of that new book, *Dear Fatherland Rest Quietly*; Norman Cousins, editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature* and author of *Modern Man Is Obsolete*; and Dr. Harrison Brown, one of the leading atomic scientists and author of *Must Destruction Be Our Destiny?*

The following week, January 9, we return to Town Hall, New York, to discuss the question "Should We Have Labor-Management Courts To Settle Labor Disputes?" Our speakers will be: Senator Homer Ferguson of Michigan, Robert J. Watt of the American Federation of Labor, Mrs. Elinore Herrick of the *New York Herald-Tribune*, and Victor Riesel of the *New York Post*.

Now for the summaries of tonight's question, "Is World Disarmament Possible Now?" here is Mr. Denny.

*Mr. Denny:* And here is General Donovan with his summary for the negative.

*General Donovan:* My position is this. Although armaments may influence wars, the causes of war lie deeper than armaments. They reside in basic conflicts between the various nations. Because of these conflicts, nations find it necessary, for security, to arm, and they measure the degree of armament by the nature of the military problem they must meet.

Under these conditions, disarmament is not possible because no

sovereign nation feels able to sacrifice its sovereignty. The only way that can be met is by setting up a world organization, in which I believe, in order that there may be a higher position to do it.

Our only chance in reaching that world organization is this: To take advantage of the proposal made by the suggested Atomic Energy Authority. Make use of the techniques in determining what may be done in this case and then applying it to other problems that arise as a basis for a future organization.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, General Donovan. Now a final word from Mr. Norman Thomas.

*Mr. Thomas:* If I understood the General correctly, I probably would like to debate with him something about the causes of war. But I have never said that armament was the sole or even the chief cause of war. I have merely said that thanks to the coming of the atomic bomb we can't afford war. The General himself says nations having quarrels think it necessary to security to arm.

I say, and all the science of the world is behind me, there is no security any more in arming. Now I go on and say that there is no renunciation of the atom bomb unless there is general renunciation of war because nations having renounced it formerly will go to it quickly in war since they'll have

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atomic energy. That's the difference.

I object strenuously for the sake of my country, my own grandchildren, to the notion that you do this bit by bit—learn A, then B. That isn't really the way that modern teachers teach the alphabet.

I say that our chance is a dramatic appeal to clear the air, to solve some disputes. I know how difficult it is, and sometimes I think if I lived on the planet Mars, I'd bet man could never succeed. But I live on Earth and I want to bet my life by proposing a dramatic and drastic plan for disarmament

under supervision with international authorities. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Thomas, General Donovan, Millard Lampell, and Tex McCrary for your help in participating in this preliminary to tomorrow's session of the Atomic Energy Commission. Will Mr. Baruch and Mr. Gromyko reach an agreement at Lake Success tomorrow? What do you think? What is your opinion on tonight's question?

The committee of judges tells me that a Mrs. Paulin wins tonight's prize. I won't repeat her question. Congratulations, Mrs. Paulin. (*Applause.*)